

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-87 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 6-16, 18, 20-29, 33-43, 45, 47-56, 60-70, 72 and 74-87 have been rejected. Claims 3-5, 17, 19, 30-32, 44, 46, 57-59, 71 and 73 have been objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent forms.

In this response, no claim has been canceled. Claims 1, 3, 15, 28, 30, 55, 57, 82-83, and 86 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Specifically, the objected to claims 3, 30, and 57 have been amended as independent claims including substantially all the limitations of their base and intervening claims. Independent claims 1, 28, 55, and 82 have been amended to include an allowable subject matter of the objected to claims 3, 30, and 57 respectively. Thus, independent claims 1, 3, 28, 30, 55, 57, and 82 as amended are allowable. Given that the rest of the claims depend from one of the above independent claims 1, 3, 28, 30, 55, 57, and 82, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are allowable.

SPECIFICATION

The Examiner stated that the title of the invention is not descriptive. Applicants have amended the title as requested. It appears that the title has been previously amended and Applicant believes that the title is descriptive. If the Examiner believes that a further amendment is needed, the Examiner is welcome to propose further amendment.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Examiner has objected to claims 15, 83 and 86 because of informalities.

Applicants have amended claims 15, 83 and 86 to overcome the Examiner's objections.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-2, 6-8, 15, 21-26, 28-29, 33-35, 42, 48-53, 55-56, 60,62, 69, 75-80 and 82-86 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,699,536 to Hopkins, et al. ("Hopkins"). Claims 1-2, 28-29 and 55-56 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,712,996 to Schepers ("Schepers"). In view of the foregoing amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections have been overcome.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 9, 11-14, 16, 18, 20, 27, 36, 38-41, 43, 45, 47, 54, 63, 65-68, 70, 72, 74, 81 and 87 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hopkins, as applied above. Claims 10, 37 and 64 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hopkins, as applied above in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,363,475 to Dowling ("Dowling"). In view of the foregoing amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections have been overcome. While Applicant does not concede that the Examiner's position is correct on the merits, Applicant has sought to obtain the claims that were objected to. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

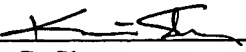
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits the present application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite or assist in the allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (408) 720-8300.

Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any shortage of fees in connection with this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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